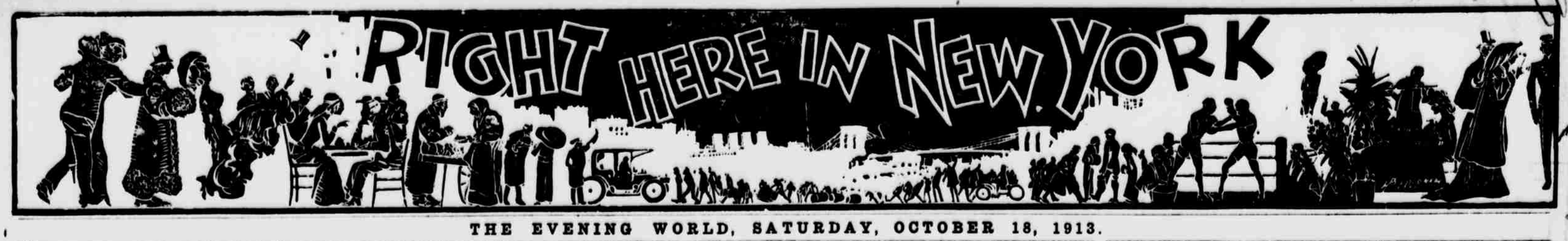
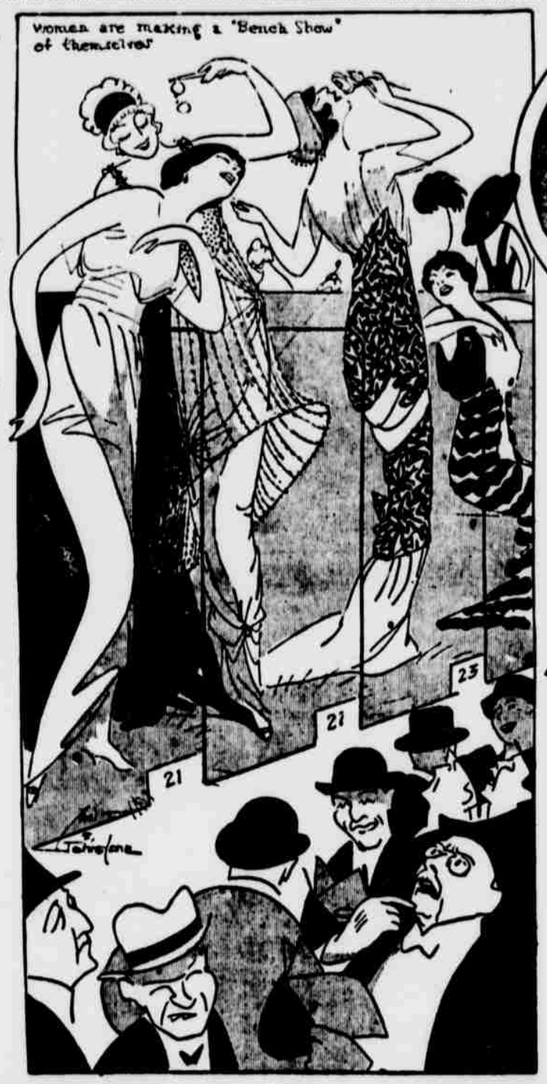


"AMERICAN HUSBAND IS A CARICATURE"

ROBERT W. CHAMBERS'

"With Jewels and Dress His Wife a Bench Show"



"The Husband Who Doesn't Approve of His Wife's Being a Wage-Earner Isn't Worth Marrying—Fifty Per Cent. of the Divorces and Unhappy Marriages Are Due to Idleness of Men and Women."

"The Women Who Combine Business and Domesticity Are the Only Ones I Can Stand—The Other Kind Bore Me to Death—American Women Are Setting an Example to the World."

Marguerite Mooers Marshall

Is matrimony woman's only business? Isn't it, like numerous other enterprises, most successful when incorporated with a flourishing side-line, a profession or an art? Does the job of being a wife automatically disqualify the holder from being anything else?

For each of these questions there are two answers. One of the two is copyrighted by the New York Board of Education. Then there is the Other Answer. And I know of no one who emphasizes it more satisfactorily than does Robert W. Chambers, by majority rule the greatest living novelist in the length and breadth of America.

If you are one of the five million persons who have read Mr. Chambers's recently published romance, "The Business of Life," you must remember the charming heroine's determination not to neglect her work as a dealer in antiques, even after her marriage to the man she loves. "The business of life must go on for us both," she tells him, gently; "for me as well as for you." And, contrariwise, the "villainess" in Mr. Chambers's novel is a completely idle wife who gets into mischief because she has nothing better to do.

The point is something more than implied; in fact, it is hammered home, in so many ways that I set it down at once as a personal conviction of the author. And he confirmed my intuition when I found him at the rehearsal of "Iole," one of the most charming of his earlier books. Broadway will see it, shortly, as a musical comedy with the real Gilbert-and-Sullivan tang.

"You believe that a woman should not be forced to give up her career just because she marries?" I asked.

"I certainly do!" he affirmed, vigorously.

"I think that every woman—I don't care who she is or whom she marries—should be permitted and even encouraged to continue after marriage the art or profession to which she has devoted herself in the past. I think it's the height of nonsense to ask her to give up her chosen work. Just because she takes a husband she shouldn't be expected to tag around after him every hour of the day!"

Mr. Chambers leaned back, untwisted his brows, slightly furrowed with honest indignation, and smiled. Let me hasten to assure his admirers that he is one of the few writer-persons who is quite satisfactory to look at. He possesses the youthful crown [illegible] I ever saw in man, woman or child, and the most malleable eyebrows. His features have a coin-like distinctness, and he smiles broadly and easily. He dresses so well that one doesn't notice it, stands and walks as no middle-aged man can do who has lived outdoors a good bit of the time. But the most attractive thing about him is his expression, a distinctive compound of sophistication, driving energy and sheer human kindliness, with every now and then a sparkle of humor seething up to the surface.

"Of course," he returned to the charge, after the briefest interval, "if a married woman is so circumstanced that she herself must perform the work of the household, that's all right. That's her share of the business of life, and she ought not to be compelled to do other things. But there are hundreds of wives who don't cook and clean and sew. These services are all performed for them. What part can such wives have in the work of the world unless they find work for themselves outside their homes?"

"And you think the American husband approves of his wife's being a wage-earner?" I suggested.

"If he doesn't he isn't worth marrying!" Mr. Chambers exclaimed, with an impatient shrug.

"The American husband is a caricature of a husband anyway. All this bench-show business makes me sick and tired; This sticking our women up and plastering them with dresses and diamonds to be stared at by the world is perfectly ridiculous. The American husband is praised because he gives his wife so much money. What a reason for praising a man! Why doesn't he let her earn her own money in her own way, to buy things for herself?"

"If he did permit this he might be able to give her more of his society," I suggested.

"If he permitted it they'd have a lot more to say when they did get together," Mr. Chambers declared emphatically. They could talk with each other instead of at each other, for each would have interesting things to tell. They could be really congenial friends."

"I gathered from 'The Business of Life' that you think idleness has a bad effect even on wealthy husbands and wives," I remarked.

"Hasn't it on all of us?" demanded Mr. Chambers, who incidentally is one of the busiest persons I know. "The idle mind always has room for mischief. You see it even in the case of dogs. A bird dog, a dog who has been trained to have some definite occupation in life, behaves himself like a gentleman when he has leisure hours. But a common, ordinary dog who's never been asked to do anything digs up the garden, barks at passersby and plays other tricks. An idle dog, idle man or woman, they're all the same.

"The divorces, the unhappy marriages, all the other evils with which society is charged, are due 50 per cent. to idleness of both men and women; 50 per cent. to the fact that women have nothing to do."

"And you do not agree with those who say that being a wife and working at an art or profession puts too severe a strain on a woman?"

"Does she want to admit that she's man's mental inferior?" Mr. Chambers inquired sharply. "I don't believe she is. Even to-day her attainments in literature compare most favorably with his. I fail to see why she should not be equally successful in all the arts and professions when we are prepared to give her a full and fair chance at them, and when we provide her with as sensible an education as her brother receives."

"Ta-ra-la-ra-la-ra-LA!" sounded from the stage, like a trill of triumphant applause for Mr. Chambers. "Iole" and her sisters were most sensibly educated, you may remember. They had the bodies of Greek goddesses because they lived out of doors, unhampered by fashions, their usual garb being pink pajamas. And they held fluent conversations in Latin and Greek. They married happily, at that.

"Even when there are children," the author-dramatist continued, "I believe that the mother need not give up entirely the work which she loves.

"Wifehood, motherhood and a profession are not incompatible.

"That, at least, is one man's opinion," he broke off with a smile that would disarm the anti-feminist editors of Life. "Other people may think differently. But, personally, I believe in the wife who does things. I believe every word I wrote about her. I don't always believe what I write, you know my theory that telling the story is the really important thing. But I was willing to make a point in this instance.

"And American women are setting an example to the world. They are going to get all they want because they are going about it the right way, with dignity, with self-respect, with competence."

It was hard to put my next question seriously to so intelligent a man as Mr. Chambers. But at last I managed it.

"You do not think that working outside her home destroys a woman's feminine grace and charm?"

"What white rat said that first?" the novelist fairly exploded. "I know it must have been a man with pink eyes!"

"And you are acquainted with women who combine business and domesticity?"

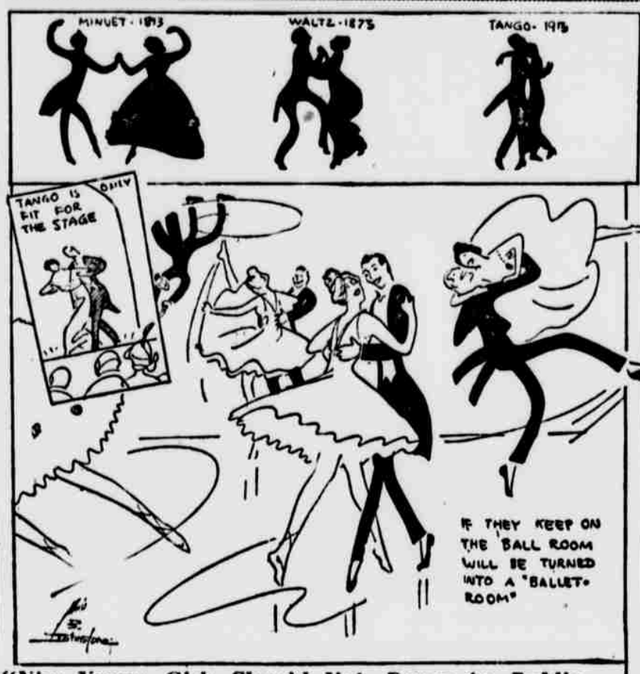
"I know hundreds of them," he responded promptly. "And, as far as I'm concerned, they're the only ones I can stand. I can't get on with the other kind at all. They bore me to death!"

So let no maid or matron believe that she qualifies for the admiration of her favorite author by posing as a lily of the field. She doesn't!

"THE STAGE EMBRACE IS NOT REAL CONTACT"

ANNA PAVLOWA

"Tango and Such Dances for the Stage, Not Society"




Anna Pavlowa

"Nice Young Girls Should Not Dance in Public Restaurants Where They Come in Contact With Every Sort of Person—It Is Wrong for a Young Girl (As Happens in These Hotel Dances) to Be Thrown Into the Arms of Everybody."

A Young Girl Must Not Cultivate Risque Effects—She Must Keep Herself Simple and Child-like and Sweet—Rouge and Powder! How Can I Believe the Young New York Girl Uses Either? So Stupid! So Useless!

Anna Pavlowa is back in New York—with one hundred and ninety-six trunks, forty members of the Russian imperial ballet, a small saffron-colored dog named Purchok and an objection to turkey trotting. No longer may we carol truthfully, "Everybody's doing it." Pavlowa isn't.

You are perhaps surprised at this attitude on the part of the woman who has won worldwide recognition as the exponent of what is known as the acrobatic school of dancing. You rather expect clergymen and other conventionally minded folk to turn away in horror from the violent and vulgar contortions of the "new" dances. But you supposed that Pavlowa, who ties herself into terpsichorean bowknots, would look with tolerance on your doing the same in your own crude and clumsy style.

But here's the point. Pavlowa knows herself to be an artist. And, with all gentleness, with all courteous consideration for the sensitive souls who throng the New York trotteries, Pavlowa believes that they do not dance for the pure love of art. One who has visited the trotteries cannot feel that Pavlowa is unduly sceptical. And the point she makes is a good one—that many things which the artist does unconsciously, become unjustifiable the moment the personal element enters into them.

"The tango and all such dances are for the stage and not for society," she said decisively. "On the stage they may be graceful, beautiful, a delight to the eye, if they are done by skilfully trained dancers. But in the ballroom they have not the same effect. They have a bad effect, and they should not be tolerated.

"Not even on the stage do I approve of the turkey trot. The turkey is one of the most ungraceful of birds, so why should human beings attempt to imitate its movements? Another objection to the turkey trot is that it involves various movements of the upper part of the body which can hardly escape being suggestive and vulgar. No dance with such movements is a proper one. The tango, properly executed, keeps all movement below the waist."

Pavlowa paused a moment, and one discovered that she has the same winning, childlike charm of expression which distinguished her two years ago. She was going out to dinner, and wore an effective evening frock of sea-green and black. The corsage was not specially low, and her only ornaments were a spray of silver leaves and a platinum chain set with tiny diamonds. Her deep brown eyes looked out from under a black hat, across the front of which rose one of the new wired lace arrangements, like a fence. Her clear, almost colorless cheeks were guiltless of obvious make-up, and her smile had nothing of the artificial quality which is usually inseparable from the beauties of either stage of society.

She began to speak again in her soft, slightly hesitant voice.

"In the olden times," she said, "when a gentleman danced with a lady he showed his respect for her by barely touching her hand. Then, with the coming of the waltz, he placed his arm around her waist. But now what does he do? He seizes her anywhere, by her shoulders, by her hips, wherever his hands happen to rest, and he pulls her about roughly, brutally. I do not like it. I do not think it is nice, or that it shows a nice feeling on the part of the gentleman.

"I should like to see the old dances revived, the courtly, courteous measures of another day. I believe dancing them would have an excellent effect on both men and women, a much better effect than all this rough-and-tumble of the present. I particularly dislike to see young girls indulging in these new dances.

"Nor do I think nice young girls should dance in public restaurants and drinking places, where they come in contact with all sorts of persons. Why do they not remain in the shelter of their homes if they must turkey-trot? Why do they not restrict their partners for this sort of dancing to one or two particularly intimate friends? It is wrong for a young girl to be thrown into the arms of everybody."

"Do you approve of the sort of costume which the new dances require—the skirt slit high?" she was asked.

"I do not think it is suitable for social gatherings," she replied, frankly. "And especially the young girl should avoid it. She must not cultivate risque effects. She must keep herself simple and childlike and sweet."

"You don't approve of her using rouge and powder, as she so often does in New York?"

Madame Pavlowa and her English secretary exchanged glances of horror.

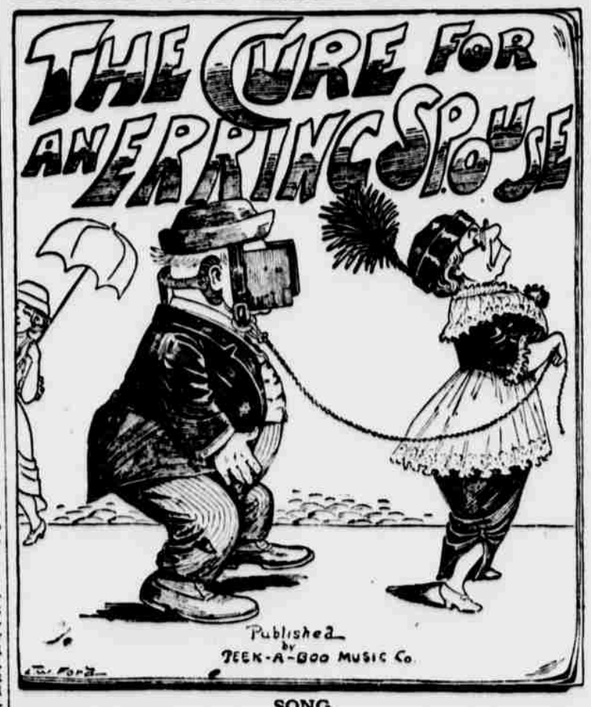
"She does that, you say?" murmured Madame. "Hardly can I believe it. And it is so stupid, so useless. The natural, fresh complexion of youth is the loveliest thing in the world.

"Dancing will always be a social amusement, and there is every reason for it to be. It expresses the joy and exultation of youth, and it helps to make the older people young again. Then it is splendid exercise, giving the body grace and strength. I think it is preferable to the severer forms of athletics for young girls. It improves their health and it gives them a poise and a charm of movement such as can be obtained in no other way.

"American girls make splendid dancers, too. I have a great admiration for them. They are naturally supple, strong and graceful, and they have wonderfully good figures. If they will stick to the social dances of distinction and refinement, they will do well.

"The stage and society are entirely different worlds," repeated Pavlowa, in closing. "They must be kept apart. When you are on the stage you are an artist living for art. If another person touches you you do not know it. The stage kiss in conventional drama is not a real kiss. The stage embrace in the dance is no real contact. But when these things are done in society there is a difference. That is why I do not like to see the stage and society mingle. If the present movement in that direction continues, the ballroom will be turned into a ballet-room."

BROADWAY BALLADS—NO. 1.



SONG.

You've seen a lot of sights to-day
I hope you're satisfied,
You've seen the gowns diaphanous,
You've seen the slits beside.

You peek at each end every one
That passes near the house;
You know you do, so I'll fix you—
It's the cure for an erring spouse.

Gen. Hancock "Turns About Face" in New York.

Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock has a new outlook on life. He didn't choose it himself. For the residents who border Hancock Square, where the discoverer that the tariff was a local issue actually holds forth in graven stone, complained to the Park Commissioner that Gen. Hancock's face made them tired and they wanted it turned the other way. And the Park Commissioner, who is not a Tammany man, listened sympathetically to their tale of woe and turned the face of the Hancock statue the other way. For twenty years the statue has looked to the south. Now it has been turned so that it looks north.

Now that the neighbors have brought about the change, they are coy about admitting it. They declare they had nothing to do with it and that the idea originated with the Park Department. The residents in the Hartridge Court Apartments were very much interested in the right-about-face movement of the General, for the pedestal and bust are in a little triangular plot just across from the apartment, and the face is about on the level with the second floor tenants. They say it "sort o' got on their nerves" to have to meet the stony glare of Gen. Hancock every time they passed the windows, and besides he should face the square which had been named after him, and not be shut off from the rest of the world by a high building.